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A Draught of a *BILL* for
*An ACT to enable their Majesties to Dispense
with the Statute of 25 Car. 2. touching the Sa-
cramental Test, and to Employ any of their Pro-
testant Subjects in the Common Defence of Them-
selves, their Government, and these Kingdoms.*

WHereas the Statute made in the 25th. year of
the Reign of King Charles the 2^d. intituled,
*An Act for preventing Dangers which may hap-
pen from Popish Recusants*, was designed and
made to prevent *Papists* from being put into Places and Of-
fices of Trust, by the Means or Power of the late King James,
then Duke of York, and a professed or known *Papist*; but
by reason of some things therein, is found to exclude divers
Protestants who are able and willing to serve their present
Majesties faithfully: And whereas there is now no danger
to be feared of the present King and Queen's Employing or
Intrusting of *Papists*, but special and great Cause in this
Juncture of Affairs, that their Majesties should have the in-
tire and unanimous Assistance of all their *Protestant* Subjects,
for the common defence of Themselves, their Government
and these Kingdoms: To the end therefore that their Maje-
sties may not be deprived of the Service of any who are
Faithfull unto Them, and well affected to Their Government;
especially when there is so great occasion, by reason both of se-
cret Conspiracies of Persons ill affected at home, and of open
Invasion threatened by so potent and active Enemies abroad:

Be it Enacted by the King and Queens Majesty, the Lords
Spiritual and Temporal, and the Commons in this present Par-
liament assembled, and by the Authority of the same, That
it shall and may be lawfull to and for their present Majesties,
during their Reign, to grant Commissions, or otherwise to
Authorize any Person or Persons, whom they shall think fit,
not being *Popish Recusants*, to hold and Execute any Office or
Employment under them, without receiving the Sacrament,
or having any Certificate thereof, as by the said Act is re-
quired; and that all Persons so Commissionated or authori-
zed, to hold or execute any Office or Employment under their
Majesties, shall and may hold and Exercise the same, according to
their several respective Commissions, although they shall not Re-
ceive the Sacrament, or have any Certificate thereof, as by the
said Act is required, without being subject to any Disability,
Forfeiture or Penalty for so doing, any thing in the said Act or any
other Act to the contrary thereof in any wise notwithstanding.

Provided notwithstanding, and be it Enacted by the Autho-
rity aforesaid, That if any Person being in truth a *Popish Recu-
sant*, though he be not then convicted or so reputed, shall accept
of any Commission, Office or Place under their said Majesties,
and shall Exercise the same contrary to the said Act, and shall
afterwards be thereof convicted, every such Person being there-
of convicted, shall be subject to all the Disabilities, Forfeitures,
and Penalties expressed in the said Act, any thing in this Act to
the contrary thereof in any wise notwithstanding.

This

THis Bill was put into the hands of some of the Lords, Munday the 22d of December last, and the next day printed Copies were delivered to several Members of both Houses.

The Reasonableness of it is apparent enough in the Preamble; and seems to be such as cannot be opposed by any, without betraying in themselves;

1. Great Impiety, in preferring and trusting the most debauched Persons of the Nation, who Impudently violate and contemn the Laws of God, and all Religion, before such serious and conscientious Christians, as dissent from us only in matters of Opinion, and concerning only some Humane Orders and Institutions, and things which we our selves acknowledge to be in their own nature Indifferent.

2. A plain Factionous Disposition, for the same reason.

3. And as plain a Disaffection and Disrespect to the King and Queen, and their Government; there being no reason to suspect or distrust either of them, that we should abridge their liberty to make use of any Persons, whom they think fit, for the service of themselves and the Kingdom.

And the Seasonableness of it at this time is such, that if it be neglected now, when the Spring is coming on, it may be in danger to be lost, as to any effect of it for this Year, in which it is like to be as necessary as ever.

It is approved and wished that it were passed, by many in both Houses: And therefore it may seem strange, that a matter so Reasonable and so Seasonable, and which is approved and desired by so many, should yet be neglected, when it might be offered with so much Advantage.

But there is an Accursed Thing, which hath hitherto hindered us, and is like so to do till it be reformed, that we cannot prosper; that we either see not what is to be done, or have not Hearts to set about it, or are baffled in our Endeavours: And it is that which doth thus unhappily affect the very best Members of the Great Council of the Nation, who are most of all to blame in this matter.

It is a great Fault in the Root of our Proceedings, a Neglect of a Fundamental Point, of that Great Duty of Gratitude and Fidelity to God, which his special Providence in our late Revolution doth in a special manner oblige us to: In plain terms, Ungrateful Impiety in the whole State, and Unfaithfulness to God in every Member of Parliament, who make any Profession of Religion, but especially those whose Office and Place in the Church obligeth them above others. Our Solemn Days of Thanksgiving as well as of Humiliation, do but increase our Guilt and Provocation, so long as not a man in either House dares move for an effectual Act for Reformation of the Great Impieties of the Nation. Those who are ashamed or afraid to do their Duties, may easily know what they have to expect: And those who have preached up Dilatory Doctrines and Counsels, under pretence of Prudence, may possibly meet with the Reward of false Prophets, and find that what they took to be Prudence was only the Wisdom of the Serpent, which beguiled them. But the whole Nation in the meantime groans under their unhappy Miscalriage.

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